

# 2023 Annual Report



Children's  
of Alabama®



ALABAMA  
POISON  
INFORMATION  
CENTER

800-222-1222

## About the APIC

The APIC has been a long-term commitment of Children's of Alabama to the citizenry of Alabama since 1958. The APIC was the 14th center established in the United States, during a time period when serious morbidity and mortality were attributed to poison ingestion in children and adults. Since its inception, the center has provided the most accurate and rapid poison information, initially to physicians only in the early years and then to both professionals and the general public. The APIC provides free and confidential lifesaving information 24/7/365. The specialists in poison information (SPIs) who answer the APIC hotline are nurses and pharmacists trained in toxicology and are nationally certified. The APIC is a fully accredited poison center by the American Association of Poison Control Centers and serves the entire state of Alabama as the only accredited statewide center designated by the Alabama Department of Public Health.



# ALABAMA POISON INFORMATION CENTER

**800-222-1222**

**POISON  
HELP**  <sup>TM</sup>  
**1-800-222-1222**

**POISONHELP.ORG**

Children's of Alabama, Blue Cross Blue Shield of Alabama Caring Foundation, the Alabama Department of Education, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services/Health Resources and Services Administration, and the Alabama Department of Public Health provide operational and educational support for the Alabama Poison Information Center.

In **2023** the APIC handled

**107,064** calls.

- **47,458** incoming calls resulting in **37,167** cases
  - **33,743** human exposures
  - **2,332** information calls
  - **1,092** animal exposures
- **59,606** follow-up calls

The APIC monitors **87%** of poison exposure calls from home on-site. In children <6 years old, **>92%** are monitored at home rather than being referred to a healthcare facility.

The APIC is available to patients of all ages. In 2023, the Center managed calls on patients that ranged from **<24 hours** to **102 years** old!

*“Thank you guys so much! It had been over 16 yrs since I had to call Poison control, and y'all are still such a blessing. I cannot thank you enough for your services, calling to check multiple times to ensure safety and allow questions to be asked helps take away some of the anxiety of worrying ♡ Thank y'all so much again.”*

*“The specialist was amazing! I was on the verge of a panic attack and she calmed me down, talked to me about everything and continued to check up on me and my daughter. I feel like she really cared about us and what was happening, and I really needed that. She is a blessing!”*

*“Everyone that handled my issue today did an amazing job with getting back with me and helped me put my mind at ease & making sure my child stayed well. They all seemed very concerned and helpful. Thank you all amazing job.”*

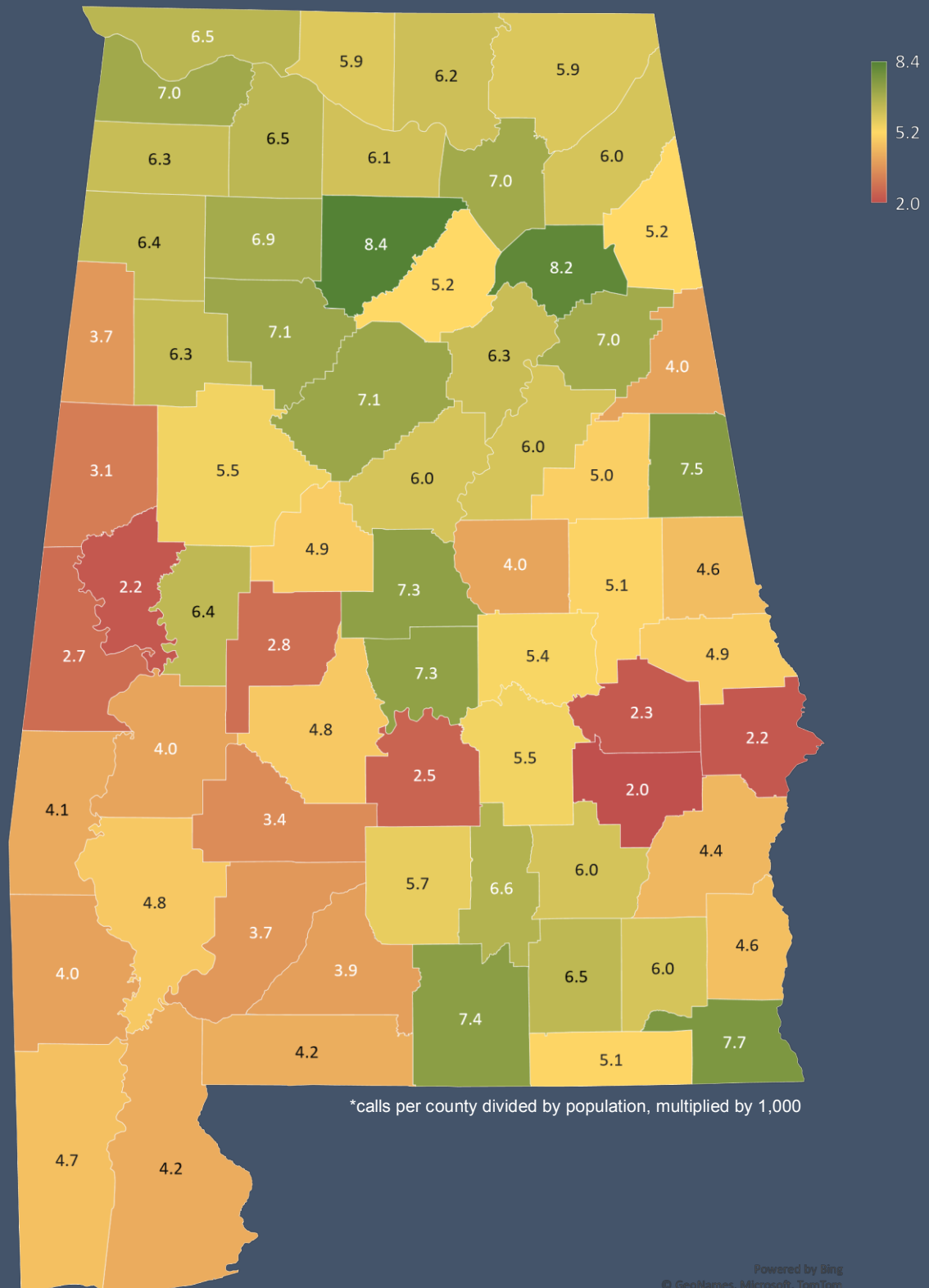
According to **996** responses to the **2023 APIC Patient Satisfaction Survey**, if the poison center was not available **37%** would have called or visited their primary care physician, **37%** would have gone to the emergency department, **19%** would have called 911, and **7%** would have called another healthcare provider (HCP), friend, or tried to find information on the internet.

*“The Nurse was comforting without mawkishness, and very professional and reassuring. She went so far as to call me back to check on my condition, and was courteous and kind, as well. What a wonderful help when one is distressed! She should get a medal—and she shall certainly receive my prayers, now and always. Thank you most kindly, Poison Control.”*

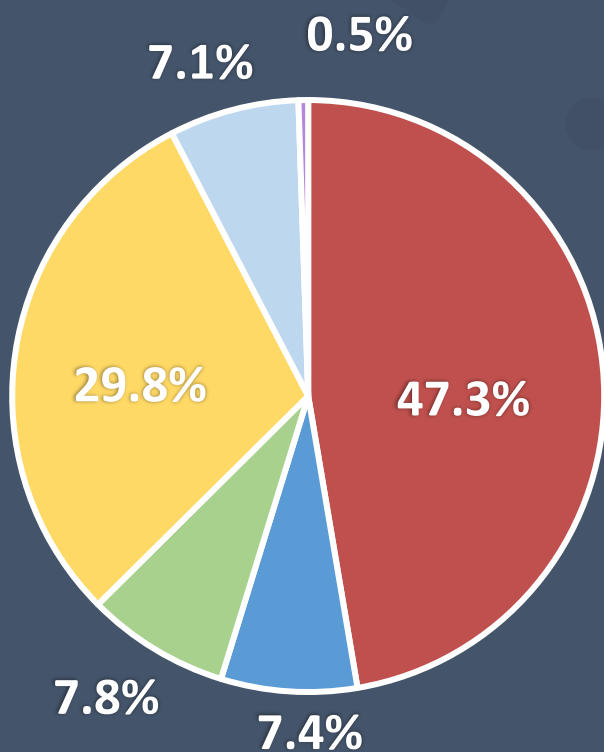
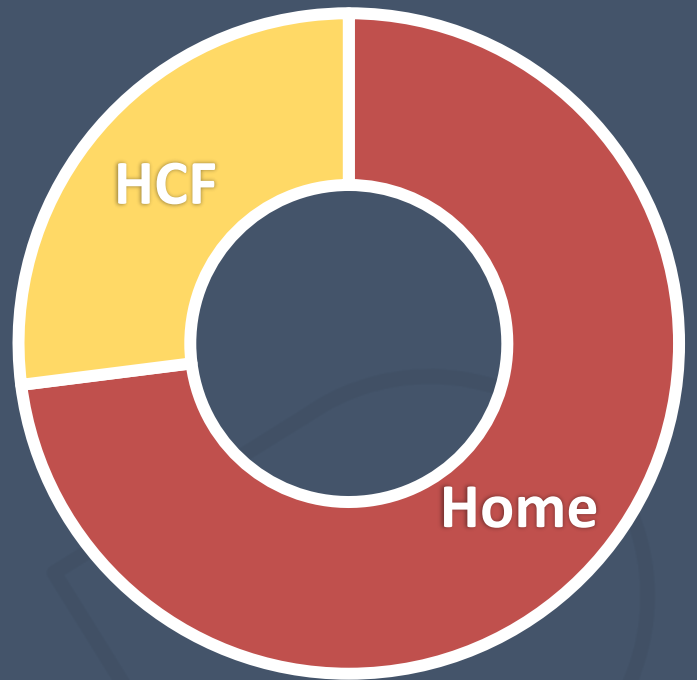
*“The Pharmacist was very calm and comforting. She told me what to do, with a screaming, hurting child in my arms. I applaud her efforts. And the fact she called back, right when she said she would helped my confidence in her treatment.”*

*“I appreciate the phone monitoring I was offered. That was a scary experience for me! Poison control eased my fears and made me feel safe.”*

# Calls per County per 1,000 Residents

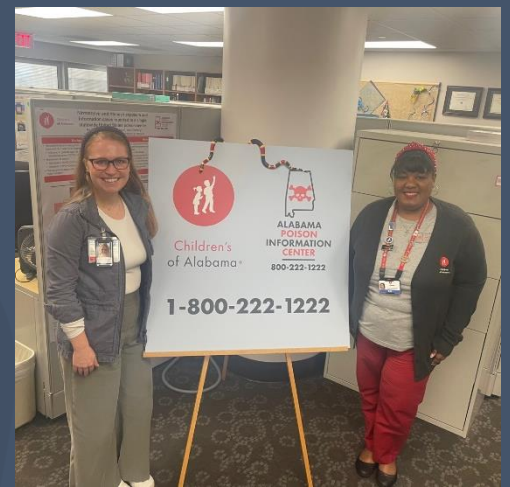


**73%** of the calls made to the APIC came from patients at home. The remaining **27%** of calls came from doctors, nurses, pharmacists, paramedics, and other health care providers.



Call Volume by Patient Age	
<6 years	15,972
6–12 years	2,505
13–19 years	2,636
20–64 years	10,059
≥65 years	2,393
Unknown	178





In 2023 the APIC hosted 10 PharmD candidate rotators, 4 PGY2 Pharmacy Residents, and 2 MPH Interns. The rotation involves researching and presenting information about toxic substances, trips to the Birmingham Zoo to see venomous and nonvenomous snakes native to Alabama, and taking calls in the Poison Center. Two PharmD students completed the Current Topics in Toxicology elective at the McWhorter School of Pharmacy and visited Birmingham Botanical Gardens to see nonpoisonous and poisonous plants.





Five months a year there is a medical toxicology elective offered to senior medical and pharmacy students and medical and pharmacy residents. The course focuses on care of the poisoned patient through direct bedside consultations at UAB and COA, daily review of APIC cases, didactics focusing on critical care toxicity, simulations in managing the intoxicated patient, and regional field trips to identify poisonous plants, mushrooms, and snakes of Alabama. Faculty is multidisciplinary with expertise in pharmacology, toxicology, hyperbaric medicine, wilderness medicine, and international medicine. In the current academic year, 12 EM medical residents, 4 pharmacy EM residents, 4 pulmonary physician/fellows, and 10 medical students completed the course. APIC also likes to celebrate milestones and events, such as staff anniversaries, poster presentations, and National Poison Prevention Week.







In 2023 the APIC participated in **154** hours of community health events, engaging with the public and distributing poison information to **5981** Alabamians.

Along with Healthy Child Care of Alabama (HCCA) the APIC provided **2,269** poison prevention programs reaching a total of **11,990** parents throughout all 67 counties.

HCCA nurses distributed **13,433** poison prevention items provided by the APIC.







# What's New

## The Pitts BCBS of Alabama Clinical Toxicology Fellowship

APIC will offer a one-year Clinical Toxicology Fellowship for the first time in the 2024-2025 fellowship year. Five board-certified toxicologists (3 MD and 2 PharmD) will lead the fellow's training along with support from APIC's specialists in poison information (SPIs and CSPIs). The fellowship provides in-depth experiences that develop the knowledge and skills necessary to care for poisoned patients. Upon completion, the graduating fellow should be able to function in a professional, administrative, and research capacity in a certified poison center, as part of a clinical toxicology service, and/or in an academic environment. The curriculum will prepare the fellow for credentialing by the American Board of Applied Toxicology via examination.

Experiences will include bedside consultations with UAB and COA patients, coordination of journal clubs and case conferences, didactic and clinical teaching of multidisciplinary learners and professionals, scholarly activity and contributions through publishing, and poison center operations and practice coverage.

**ALABAMA POISON INFORMATION CENTER**  
1-800-955-5222

**Children's of Alabama**

### CLINICAL TOXICOLOGY FELLOWSHIP

#### The Training Site

The Alabama Poison Information Center (APIC) at Children's of Alabama offers a one-year Clinical Toxicology Fellowship.

The Alabama Poison Information Center is accredited by America's Poison Centers and has been serving the people of Alabama since 1958. Our team provides specialized, 24-hour poison information and care, facilitating triage, assessment, management, and prevention of poisonings. Five board-certified toxicologists (3 MD and 2 PharmD) will lead the fellow's training along with support from specialists in poison information (SPIs and CSPIs).

The fellowship provides in-depth experiences that develop the knowledge and skills necessary to care for poisoned patients. Upon completion, the graduating fellow should be able to function in a professional, administrative, and research capacity in a certified poison center, as part of a clinical toxicology service, and/or in an academic environment.

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#### Requirements

Graduates from accredited colleges of pharmacy must hold a Doctor of Pharmacy degree and must be eligible for Alabama licensure. Completion of an ASHP-accredited PGY1 Pharmacy Residency is required.

Graduates from accredited schools of nursing must hold an advanced degree in a field related to toxicology. Additional information for a minimum of 3 years is required.

#### Experiences

- Consulting, including bedside consultations provided to UAB Hospital and Children's of Alabama
- Coordination of journal clubs and case conferences
- Teaching, both didactic and clinical, of multidisciplinary learners and professionals
- Scholarly activity and contributions through publishing
- Poison center operations and practice coverage

#### Deadline for application: January 5, 2024

- Children's of Alabama application
- Letter of intent
- Curriculum Vitae
- Official transcript(s)
- Three letters of recommendation
- Scheduled interview

This program does not participate in the ECFMG Match program. However, our graduates in their 1st year prior to the deadline are invited to participate in the match process.

#### Benefits

- Competitive stipend
- Paid time off and insurance benefits
- Travel to and attendance at national toxicology conference

#### Contact

   
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The National Self-Insured Health Plan, 1-800-322-3222  
contracts only. To request contract 2477365





## Ann Slattery

DrPH, RN, RPh, DABAT, FACCT

Dr. Ann Slattery retires as Director of the Alabama Poison Information Center. Ann graduated from Samford twice, once with a nursing degree and again with a pharmacy degree. She received her Master and Doctorate in Environmental Health/Toxicology from the UAB School of Public Health. She completed a Fellowship with the CDC/ATSDR working on the Fresh Kills Landfill health assessment. Ann is a board-certified clinical toxicologist (DABAT) and a Fellow of the American Academy of Clinical Toxicology.

When Ann accepted a position at The Children's Hospital Poison Control Center in 1982, she never imagined that she would stay for 41 years. Back then, the poison center was located in a closet in the pharmacy. Micromedex (our database) was contained within over 500 microfiche, and one of the two microfiche readers in the center doubled as a Kodak printer. In 1985, the microfiche were converted to CD-ROMS. Fast forward to the '90s, our name changed to The Regional Poison Control Center. We used a computer to view Micromedex/Poisindex but still had paper charts. By 2000, everything in the poison center was computerized and online. In 2000, once a case/chart was entered into the APIC database, it arrived at the National Poison Data System (NPDS) in 10 minutes. In 2023, cases/charts now arrive at NPDS in less than 5 minutes. We have been the Alabama Poison Information Center since our final name change in March of 2020.

Ann says participating in the growth of the APIC has been one of her greatest joys. As a toxicologist, Ann was privileged to travel across the US, Canada, and Europe while serving as a member or chair of many America's Poison Centers (APC) and American Academy of Clinical Toxicology/American Board of Applied Toxicology committees, including the SPI, accreditation, QA, and CDC committees. Ann leaves an indelible mark on APIC after 41 years, and her impact will be felt for many more.



# APIC in the Media

## Interviews:

Caffeine overload: Doctors warning about the dangers of too much

Poison Center Educator discusses poisonings during Dothan Radiothon

Children sick from edibles on the rise in Alabama

Children eating dangerous gummy products on the rise in Alabama

Purse Dangers: Poison Awareness Week | Talk of Alabama

National Poison Prevention Week

Poison Prevention Week

Poison Centers are here for you when poisonings happen

UAB's Snakebite Clinic is making sure explorers stay vigilant

Think You Know What To Do After A Snake Bite? This ER Doctor May Disagree

## Online Newsrooms:

The spring hazards parents need to know about

Comprehensive Snakebite Program offers multidisciplinary care for snakebite victims

## Top 10 Substances seen in Pediatric Exposures in Alabama\*

1. Cleaning Products
2. Cosmetics
3. Analgesics
4. Dietary Supplements
5. Foreign Bodies
6. Antihistamines
7. Pesticides
8. Vitamins
9. Topicals
10. GI Preparations

\*Pediatric patients less than 6 years of age

## Top 10 Substances seen in Pediatric Exposures in the US\*

1. Cleaning Products
2. Analgesics
3. Cosmetics
4. Foreign Bodies
5. Dietary Supplements
6. Antihistamines
7. Vitamins
8. Topicals
9. Pesticides
10. Plants

\*Pediatric patients less than 6 years of age

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[www.ChildrensAL.org/APIIC](http://www.ChildrensAL.org/APIIC)